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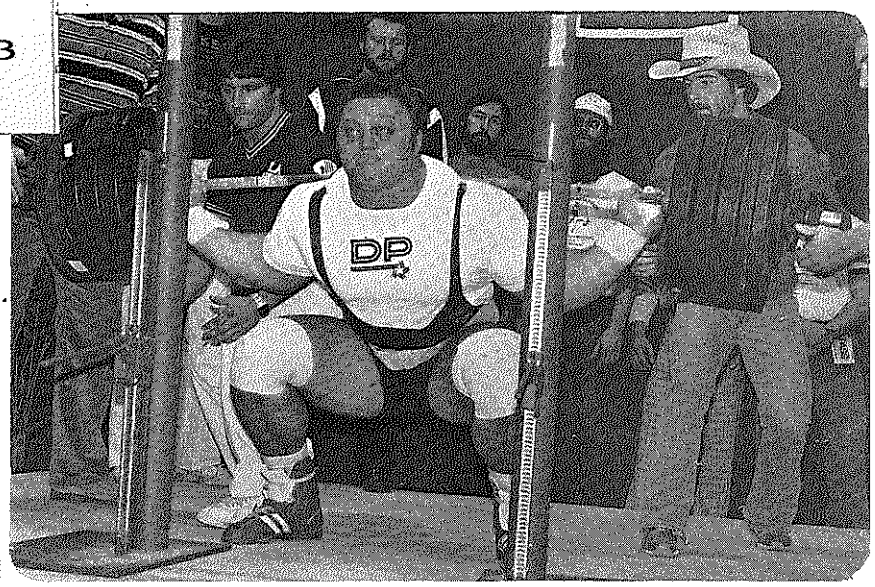

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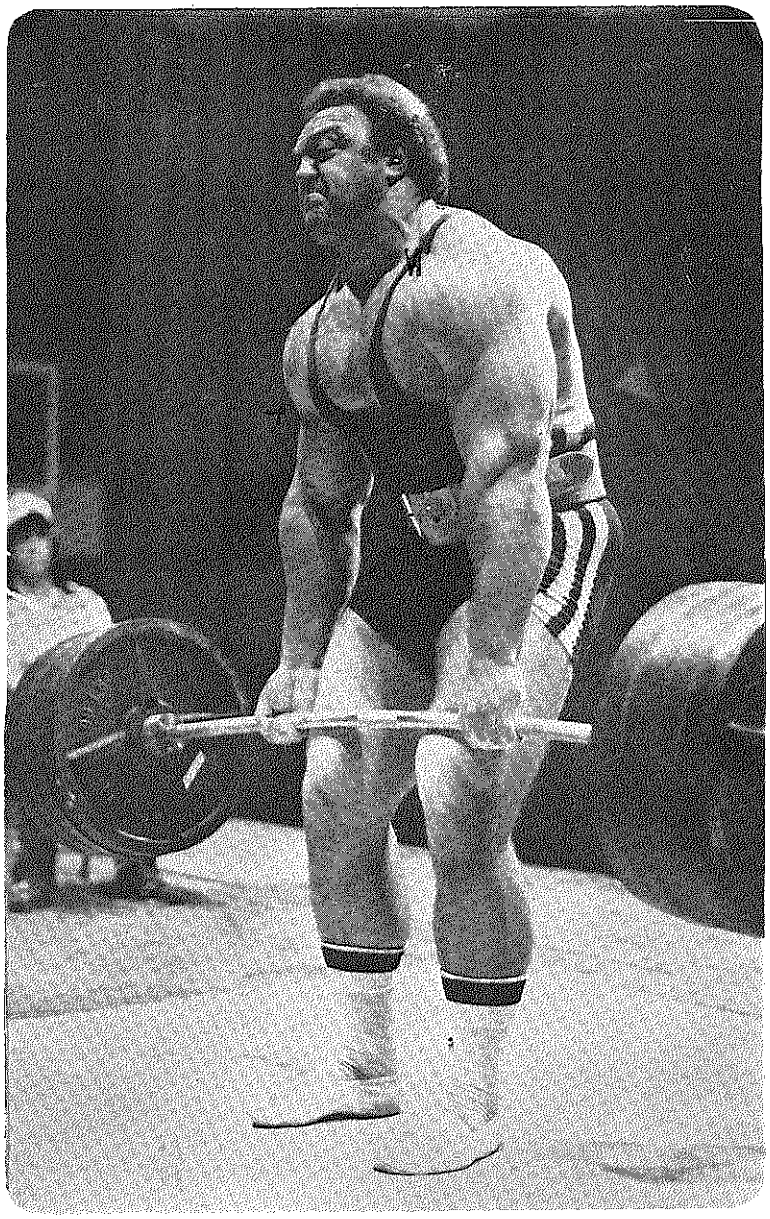


SQUAT

&

DEADLIFT

PREFACE

Increased ability on the squat and deadlift is a product of an intricate combination of several features. Gains are made from developing efficient styles, utilizing a sensible cycle for peaking, building the muscle to warrant increased strength and in maintaining an enthusiastic mental perspective on the goal at hand.

All these are accessible. The squat and deadlift technique and workout program and cycle will be subsequently discussed in detail. From these you will develop the muscle that accompanies the greatest strength gains and also the important mental outlook providing you adopt the right philosophy throughout your training. My concepts and philosophies on training for these lifts vary considerably from those held by many others. I feel it is therefore essential to explain these philosophies now for emphasis and in so doing possibly denounce some popular misconceptions.

To encapsulate my training philosophy would be to say "train hard and fast", but there is much more involved than can be explained in that short phrase. Primarily you need to divorce yourself from a preoccupation with maximal weights, be it singles or low repetitions, where weight and not work is the motivator. Continually testing yourself with maximal poundages is a self-indulgent step into staleness, slow gains and discouragement. Believe in the notion that if you build useful muscle greater strength will accompany it. FOR 75% TO 80% OF THE TIME THE KEY WORD DURING WORKOUTS IS **INTENSITY**—WORKING FOR MUSCLE EXHAUSTION, INCREASING WEIGHTS GRADUALLY ONCE THEY HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED SATISFACTORILY. Consistency of this approach, performing smooth and proficient sets and repetitions over a long period of time, will build the muscular basis for substantial strength gains and ward against premature peaking and staleness.

Only in the last four weeks of the overall cycle does poundage take over as the prime motivator. During this period believe in the ground work you have laid and expect rapid gains in the poundages capable of being handled from workout to workout, but always, know yourself and listen to the messages you body is giving you—don't over extend yourself and get discouraged. Intuitively you should know your capabilities, be reasonable and honest with yourself and you will realize your true immediate potential and develop a perfect working relationship with yourself to promote even greater advancements in the future.

COMPETITIVE SQUATTING STYLE AND TECHNICALITIES

To squat with a weight is a simple enough concept, yet there are still many considerations necessary in order to perform with maximum efficiency so gaining maximum poundage. Perhaps the best way to illustrate the practicalities of squatting is to run through, step by step, the execution of a competitive squat making relevant observations and suggestions upon its performance.

Approach the bar with positive thoughts of a successful lift, definitely not a time for doubt.

Grip the bar with as narrow a hand spacing as possible, with thumbs around the bar, while still allowing the bar to be carried low without too much discomfort to the shoulders, elbows or wrists.

The position of the bar on the shoulders should be within the International Powerlifting Federation (I.P.F.) rules—no lower than 1¼ inches between the top of the bar and the top of the anterior deltoids. A position in which you should feel stable, should be able to stand sufficiently upright as to satisfy the referees, and one that affords the best leverage advantage to you body structure. With the correct position you should not be able to round your back during the squat even if you wanted to.

Elbows should not be held high but rather forced down so that you can feel contact between tensed tricep and lat. Lighter lifters be aware of the possibility of the elbows touching the thighs whilst in the bottom squat position (an infringement of the rules). Adjust your grip to avoid this if it seems probable.

A solid bar and arm position is important. You should feel like yourself and the bar are one, joined together, and that squatting with it is like squatting with a natural extension of yourself.

Stepping out from the rack and assuming the correct foot stance should be done with as little delay as possible, taking just enough steps to clear the racks and positive adjustments to get the feet set.

Keep your attitude positive and confident and look up to the position you decide to focus on to await the referee's signal.

The foot spacing is dictated by individual structure and leverage. To keep within the limits where all the muscles involved can work best together I would definitely go wider than shoulder width but not excessively wide, with toes pointed slightly outwards.

Inhale deeply before the descent and keep the head forced back slightly throughout.

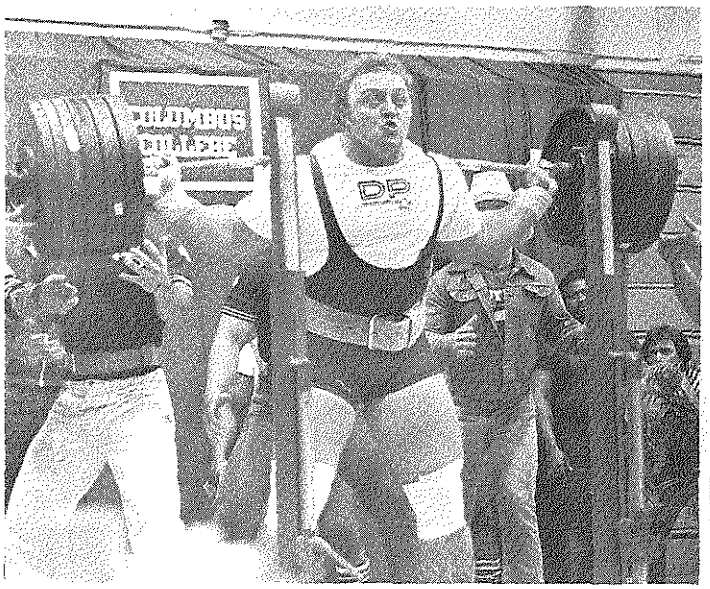
Upon first unlocking the knees for the squat the butt should consciously be pushed backwards. This inclines the trunk forward and helps keep the lower legs in a more upright position.

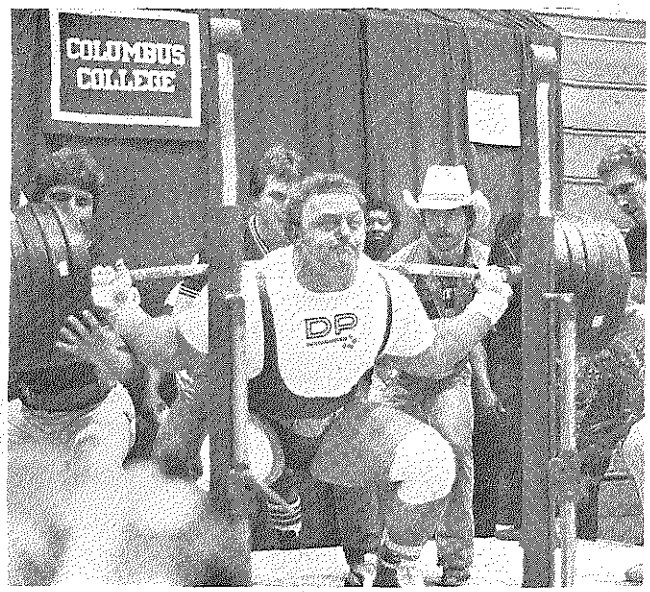
Going down in the squat should be controlled. To let the tight suit and knee wraps work best for you drop a little faster towards the bottom position and rebound whilst driving strongly with the legs.

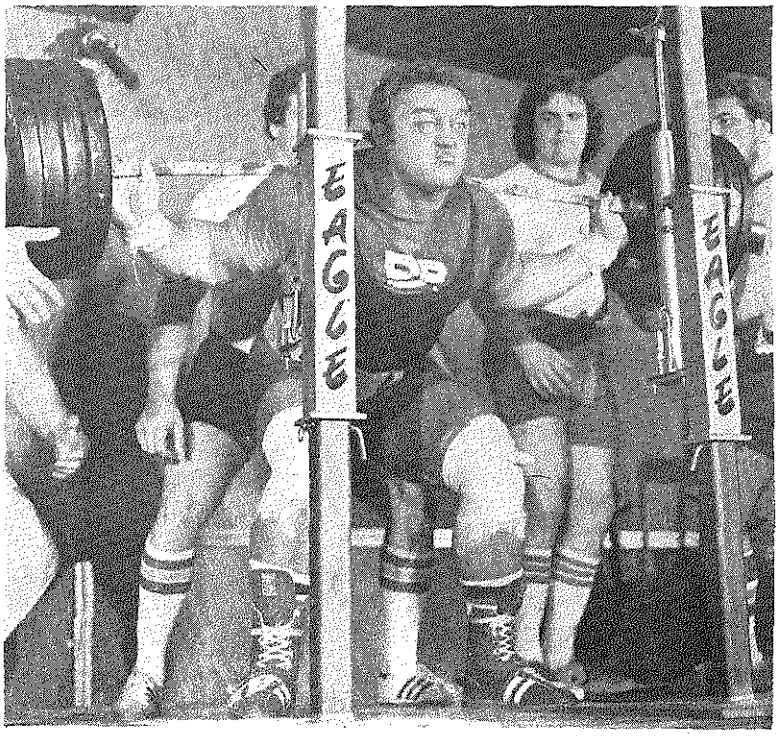
It's important to endeavor to keep the knees as much over the instep as possible. This makes it easier to sink into the break parallel position and lessens the distance the bar travels.

Drive all the way through when coming up with the squat, keeping the lats and arms tensed under the bar so maintaing solidity and control, gradually exhaling upon completion.

Lock the knees and resume an upright position to receive the referee's signal for the completion of the lift and to rack the bar.







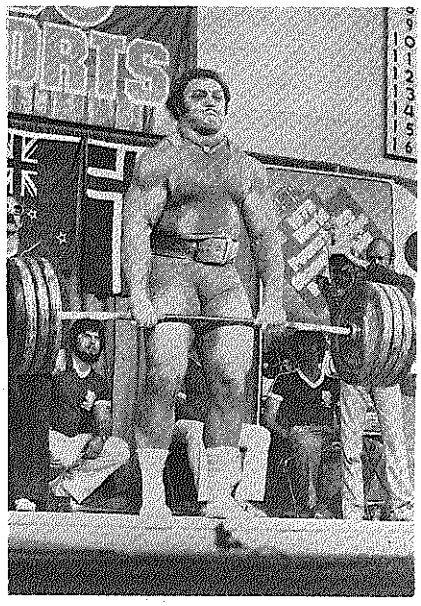
If you develop a good strict style in training it should follow automatically in meets. Practice makes perfect—develop your squatting "groove" and work at making it a natural movement for you. Don't get too avaricious in training, seeking those big poundages you are not capable of in strict style. It's best to train within yourself, developing good rather than bad form with the confident knowledge that big singles will be yours at contest time. Finally, correct form is often governed by the tight suit and wraps. Use these in training for at least the last 4 to 8 weeks on the heavy days to condition yourself to the style.

COMPETITIVE DEADLIFT STYLE AND TECHINICALITIES

Again, deadlifting a weight is a simple concept, yet it still involves the observation of many considerations to perform with maximum efficiency.

Never approach any heavy lift with anything but positive thoughts. Especially in the deadlift, when possibly attempting a winning lift, a weight you may never have tried before, don't be tempted to deviate from the style you have become accustomed to and are proficient with, rounding the back more or sacrificing initial leg drive for a faster start. If that style was better you should have been using it in training. Condition yourself to the style that suits you best and us it exclusively.

Conventional Style:



Bend your legs and incline your trunk over the bar with back held naturally, neither held rigidly flat nor especially rounded. Don't sit too deeply into the starting position.

Use a grip that feels comfortable, obviously with one hand reversed unless you have a preference for the hook grip. Spacing them not much greater than shoulder width.

If you experience difficulties in finishing a deadlift position the bar about 2 inches away from the shins at the start, otherwise keep the bar in close to the shins.

A compact yet powerful feeling is important in assuming the starting position.

Tense the lats and shoulders and pull with a smooth coordinated effort of legs, hips and back, transferring the weight onto the heels.

Avoid the temptation to lean back with the bar, pulling it along the thighs, if the finish is difficult. This is reason for failure according to the rules. Keep upright and use the strength you have been building with the round back deadlifts and shrugs.

Keep your head and neck in line with the spine throughout the lift.

Inhale before pulling and exhale through the sticking point or upon lockout.

"Sumo-Style"

This style contrasts with the conventional style deadlift in a number of ways. It's important to try to maintain a slightly inclined yet flat back throughout. Gripping compactly between the legs, sit back with the hips low, toes and knees pointing outwards, lats and shoulders still tensed while looking forward or upward. The initial effort is primarily from the legs, fighting the tendancy of the back to round or incline forward too much. Pull through smoothly, coordinating leg, back and hip strength.

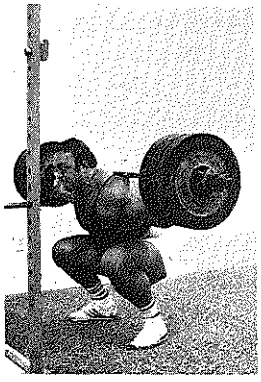
Again, practice makes perfect—develop a natural and efficient style in training and it should follow automatically in meets. As with the squat, don't over extend your capabilities in training at the sacrifice of style. Train within yourself concentrating on building muscle, form, strength and confidence.

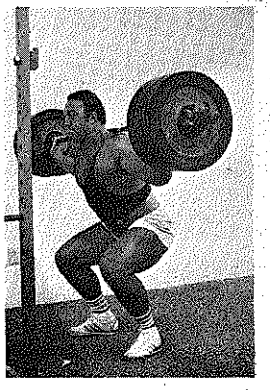
ASSISTANCE EXERCISES

The following assistance exercises should be used to promote greater ability in the squat and deadlift. In an attempt to present the program as clearly as possible the assistance exercises will first be described as far as performance, technique, etc., and then included in the overall program with sets and repetitions explained.

Squat-Light

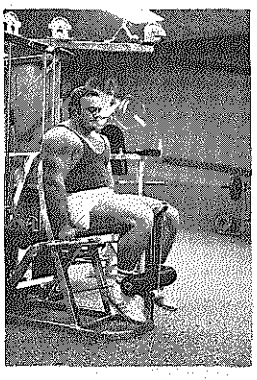
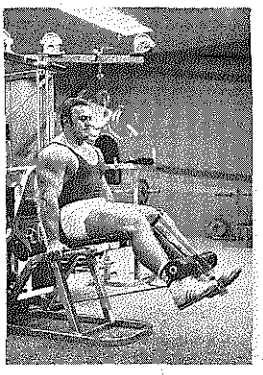
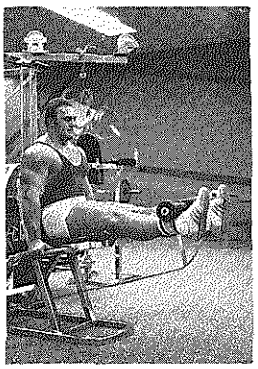
In contrast to the competition style squats these should be performed with the bar high on the trapezius muscles and with a narrow stance, shoulder width or slightly less. With the bar held high there is more difficulty in maintaining a flat back, however, it is important to do so. The weights should never be so heavy as to force you to round your back, raising the heels with different shoes or blocks might help to prevent this. A belt should be worn but a tight suit and knee wraps are less important. In this exercise weight is not of primary importance, intensity, speed and explosive drive out of the bottom position are the main aspects.





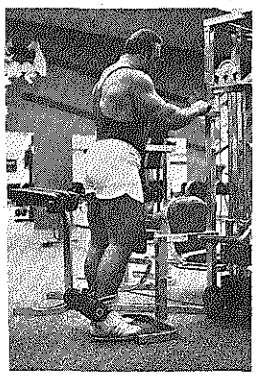
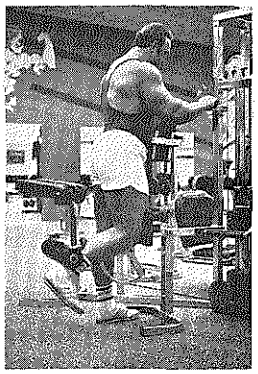
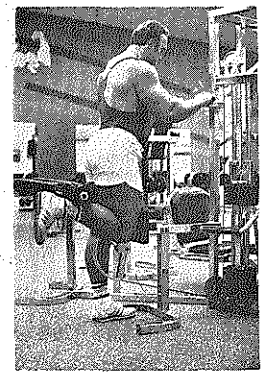
Leg Extension

A deliberate and controlled extension on the appropriate machine.

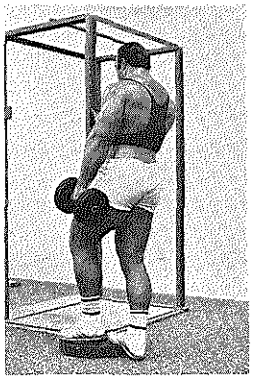
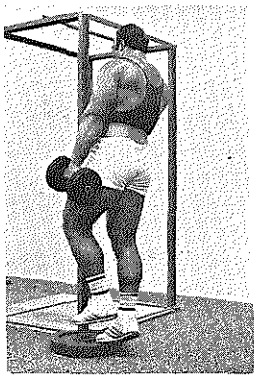
Leg Curl

Again, keep the movement strict and controlled in both directions.

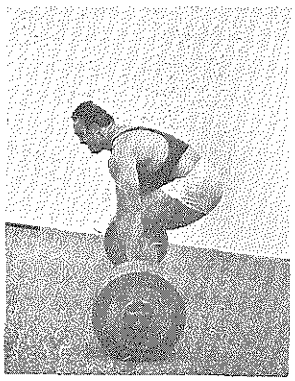
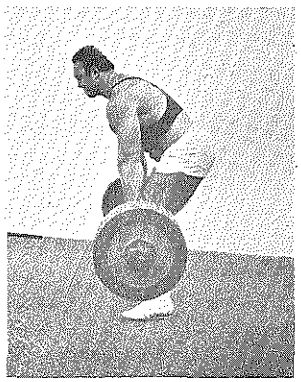
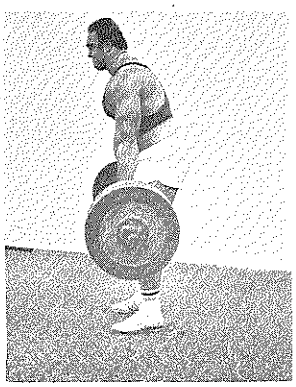
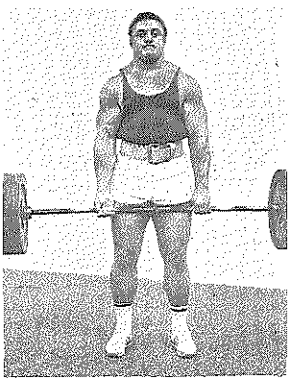
Calf Raise

With a multitude of equipment and exercises to choose from, all giving virtually the same action, it's really a question of availability and personal preference. In fact, I vary the exercises just for a change.

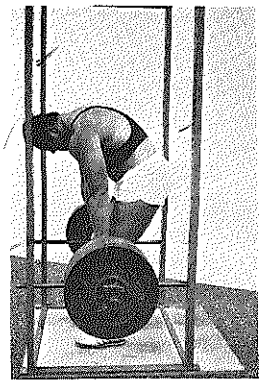
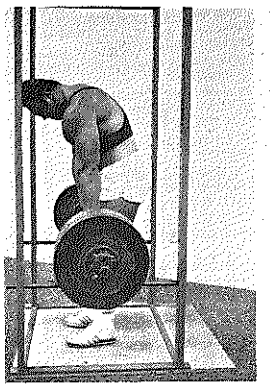
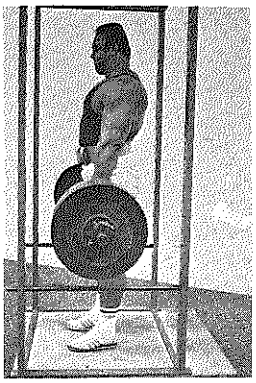
Deadlift-Light

The emphasis in this exercise is on unstrained muscle action without much rest between sets, using a controlled bounce between repetitions. Use the same style as used on heavy days except "sumo-style" deadlifters who should revert to the conventional style.

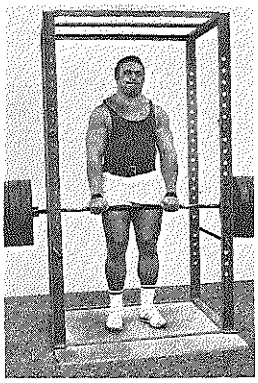
Round Back Rack Deadlift

Position the bar either in racks or on boxes at a point about 1½ inches below the knee caps. With a fairly narrow foot stance, a grip about shoulder width and with back exaggeratedly rounded, smoothly lift the bar to lock out whilst "uncoiling" the spine. It's important to start off with light weights on this exercise and keep movements smooth. The top weights used should never exceed your regular deadlift poundage. Pause slightly between each repetition.

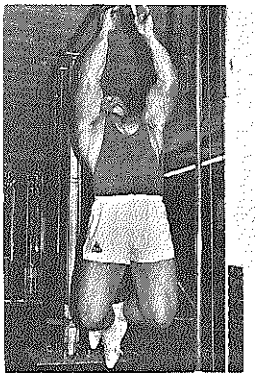
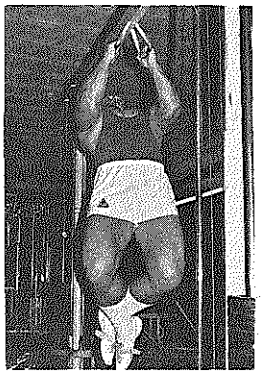
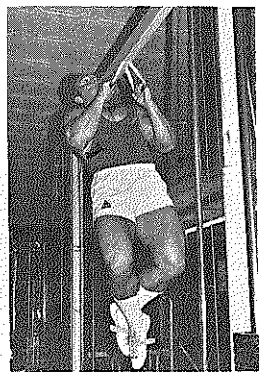
Shrugs

Most comfortably performed using a double over grip with thumbs over the bar with the fingers, using straps to secure this grip. The shrug should be an up and down movement not one in which the shoulders are rolled. Try to develop the movement into an olympic weightlifting type pull with the bar kept close to the thighs. Without consciously trying to bend the arms, lift the shoulders as high as possible. "Catch" the lowered bar on slightly bent thighs and repeat raising slight on the toes during the pull. On the light day high repetitions should be used, building up to as many as 40 in one set (total exhaustion), bouncing the bar slightly off the thighs and shrugging as high as possible each time in a series of continuous repetitions. This initial exhaustive set should be followed by a similar performance to exhaustion followed by a final set of fewer, stricter repetitions without the bounce off the thighs. On the heavier day use the bouncing style with more poundage and lower repetitions. Using a shoulder width hand spacing the thumbs would be rubbed unmercifully if not kept over the bar.



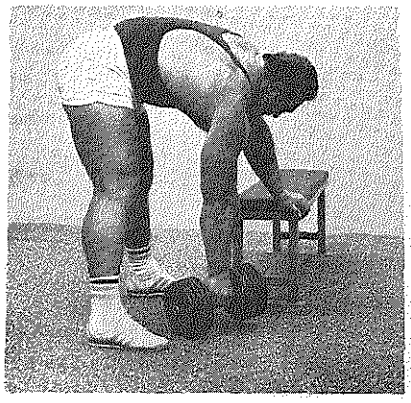
Close Grip Chins

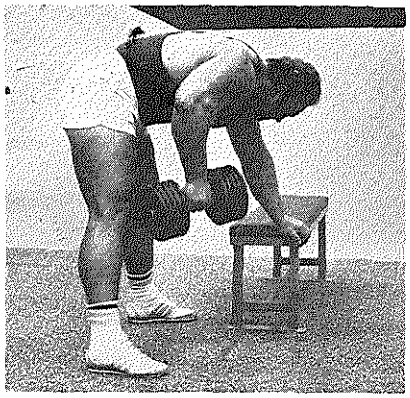
A V-bar provides a better position for performing these chins. Incline the body backwards so that you can pull yourself up and try to connect your hands to your chest, resist on the way down and extend fully. Build up to 15 repetitions before adding any weighted resistance.

One Arm Row

Supporting one hand on a bench in a bent over position pull the dumbell up close to the chest and lower slowly, twisting the front of the dumbell in at the bottom Consciously think about working the lats and raise the upper arms as high as possible. Work fast, almost alternating arms without pause throughout.

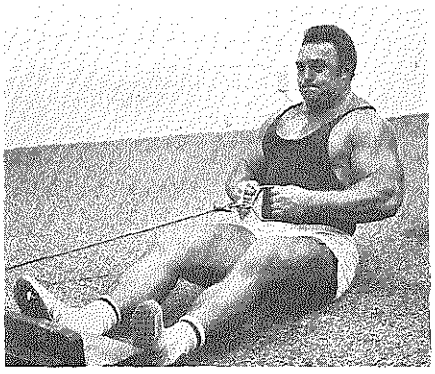


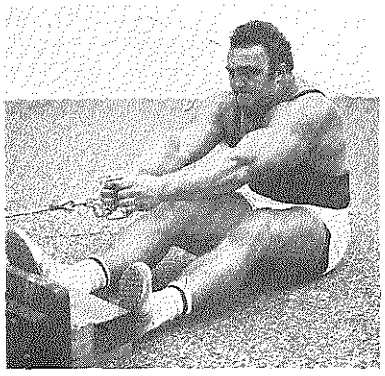


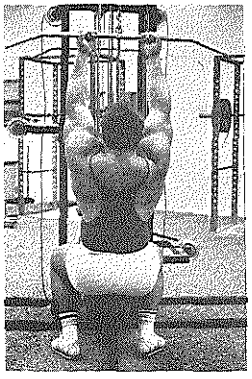
Complete row with arm tucked close into body

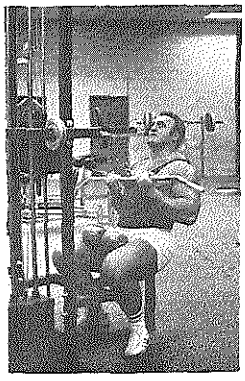
Seated Row

Requires a pulley arrangement at about waist level when sat on the floor. Secure the feet at an adequate distance from the machine to allow complete extension. Again, concentrate on the lats and pull the upper arms to the sides of the chest and well back. A narrow underhand grip pulldown on a normal lat machine can be substituted if the required pulley arrangement is not available.





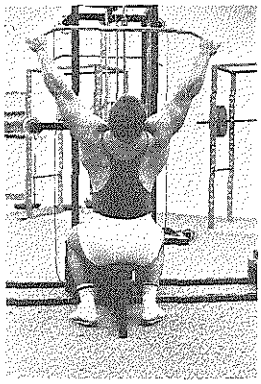


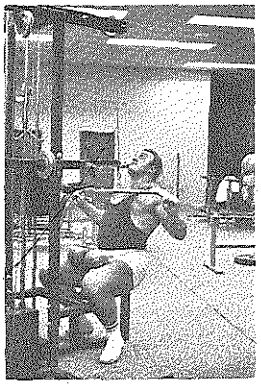


If pulley not available use: Narrow Underhand Grip Pulldown

Wide Grip Pulldown To Chest

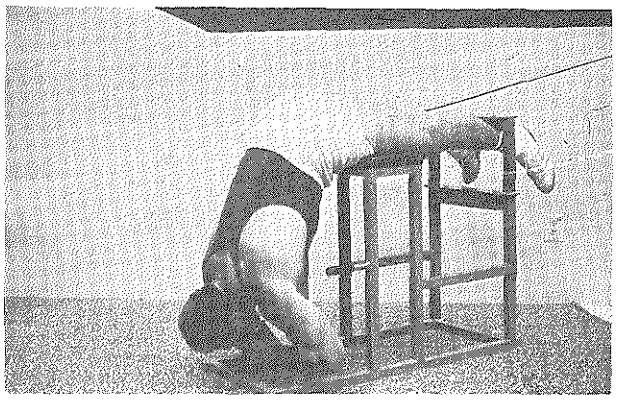
Performed either seated or kneeling whilst facing the lat machine. Taking a wide grip pull the bar down to mid chest. Resist the weight on the return and extend fully.

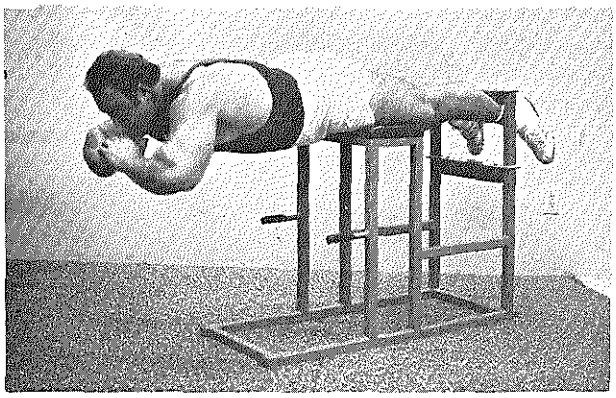




Hyperextension

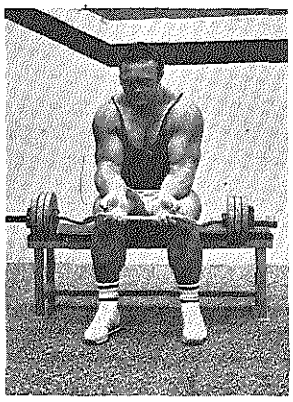
Extended face down on the hyperextension bench lower body as far as possible and resume position level with floor keeping back flat, arching back beyond this position is not necessary and possibly injurious. Use weighted resistance beyond 15 repetitions holding a weight or short bar behind the neck.

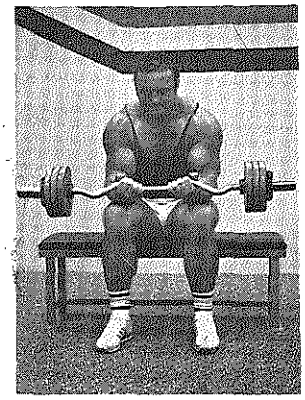




Forearm Curl

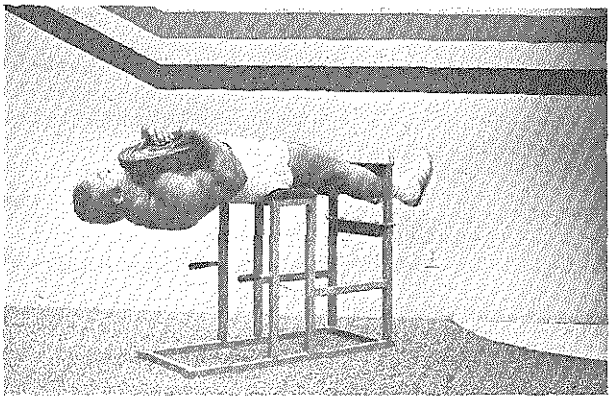
Best to use an E-Z-Bar. Sitting on a bench with arms extended along the thighs, knuckles down, drop the wrists and then raise them flexing as much as possible.

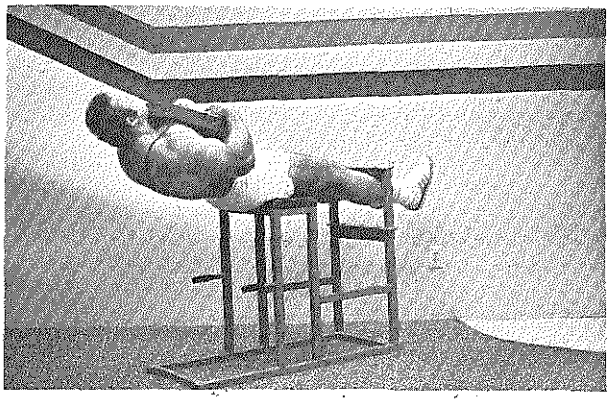




Roman Chair Sit-Ups

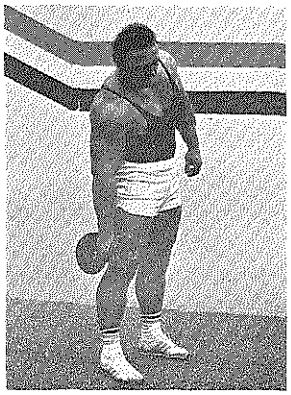
Extend the body along the roman chair or hyperextension bench and keep the movement within the mid range Bend the body slightly backwards and then curl the body up in a short range movement. Weights can be held on the chest for added resistance.

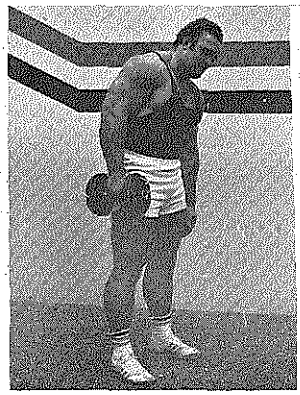




Side Bend

Holding a dumbell in one hand and keeping the trunk perfectly upright, bend sideways towards the dumbell and return to the erect position. Alternate each side without rest, extending as fully as possible.





PROGRAM DETAILS

Having considered in detail the underlying training philosophies, the techniques and the assistance exercises concerned with squatting and deadlifting, it is time to lay the program out in detail. The whole program is based on a four-day-a-week workout schedule, taken for myself, on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, although this could obviously be any combination of the same sequence of workout and resting days. Progressing through a 10, 8, 5, 3, and 2 repetition cycle for the key lifts, peaking to correspond normally with a contest, the cycle lasts for 14 weeks.

Tuesday [Heavy upper back & forearm work]
- Close Grip Chins 4xMax
- One Arm Row 4x10
- Seated Row 4x10
- Wide Grip Pulldown to Chest 4x10
- Forearm Curl 5x10

Wednesday
- Squat-Heavy, Competitive Style (See Table Below)
- Deadlift-Light (See Table Below)
- Round Back Rack Deadlift (See Table Below)
- Shrugs-Light 2x15 to 40, 1x10 to 20
- Leg Extension 3x10
- Leg Curl 3x10
- Calf Raise 3x15 to 25
- Roman Chair Sit-ups 3 Sets
- Side Bend 3 Sets
- Hyperextension (For first 8 weeks of cycle only) 3x10 to 15

Friday [Lighter, faster upper back and forearm work]
- Close Grip Chins 3xMax
- One Arm Row 3x12
- Seated Row 3x12
- Wide Grip Pulldown to Chest 3x12
- Forearm Curl 4x12

Saturday
- Deadlift-Heavy, Competitive Style (See Table Below)
- Squat-Light (See Table Below)
- Shrugs-Heavy 4x10 to 15
- Leg Extension 3x10
- Leg Curl 3x10
- Calf Raise 3x15 to 25
- Roman Chair Sit-ups 3 Sets
- Side Bend 3 Sets
- Hyperextension (For first 8 weeks of cycle only) 3x10 to 15

Squat and Deadlift Table of Cycle & Repetitions

WEEKS TO CONTEST ➤	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
SQUAT—HEAVY COMPETITIVE STYLE	Appropriate warm up sets, then → 4x10	4x10	4x10	4x8	4x8	4x8	3x5	3x5	3x5	3x5	3x3	3x3	2x2	2x2*
							then the following down sets → 1x10	1x10	1x10	1x10	1x8	1x8	2x8	2x8†
DEADLIFT—LIGHT & ROUND BACK RACK DEADLIFT	Appropriate warm up sets, then (using controlled bounce) → 3x10	3x10	3x10	3x8	3x8	3x8	2 light warm up sets (using controlled bounce) Then onto Round Back Rack Deadlift →							None
	None →						1x8 light warm up set, then → 3x8	3x8	3x8	3x5	3x5	3x5	3x5	None
							(Pausing between each rep.) →							
DEADLIFT—HEAVY COMPETITIVE STYLE	Appropriate warm up sets, then → 4x10	4x10	4x10	4x8	4x8	4x8	3x5	3x5	3x5	3x3	2x3	2x3	2x2**	None
	(using controlled bounce) →								(Pausing between each rep) →					
									Plus 1 down set of 8 reps (using controlled bounce) →					
SQUAT—LIGHT	Appropriate warm up sets, then → 4x10	4x10	4x10	4x10	4x8	4x8	4x8	4x8	4x6	4x6	4x6	4x5	4x5	None

* Last workout 5 or 6 days before meet ** Last workout 8 or 9 days before meet †Moderately Light

The program layout is self-explanatory. Work all assistance exercises with speed and intensity without forsaking strict form, increasing weights only when the sets have been achieved satisfactorily. On the heavier lifts take more time between sets to ensure full recovery so that form and technique is not compromised, always staying slightly withing yourself strengthwise.

When performing this cycle of workouts there are other important considerations. If you are not accustomed to the type of workload at the beginning start with less sets and gradually build up to the full amount. Exercise good sense in your choice of poundage throughout the whole cycle. Remember, for the first six weeks, the accent for the heavy squats and deadlifts still revolves somewhat around intensity combined with sensible poundages. Wait until all sets can be proficiently accomplished before increasing any weight, and then make only the increases you realistically feel capable of. Don't over extend yourself as this could lead to frustration and staleness.

The deadlift schedule incorporated in the above program applies to what I consider to be the most practiced type of performance—that where the deadlift is an even effort throughout or where the general sticking point is near completion.

"Sumo-style" deadlifters should follow it as it is, merely doing their "sumo" deadlifts on the heavy, competitive style day.

Those lifters who, once getting the bar to the knees, finish the lift very strongly should make the following adjustment on the light deadlift day. Disregard the rack deadlifts, instead use an exaggerated round back, in the same principle, from the floor for all sets. Again keeping all weights used below the regular deadlift poundages, and paying extra attention to warming up thoroughly. e.g. 11 weeks to contest: warm up then, 3x8 regular style; 8 weeks to contest:2x10, 1x8, 3x8-all round backed deadlifts from floor.

VARIATIONS

One of the keys to continual progress is an enthusiastic attitude. Becoming stale on a program affects this enthusiasm adversely. This program is designed to deter against any such retrogression but that does not guarantee that with some lifters it will not happen. Always LISTEN TO THE MESSAGES YOUR BODY IS GIVING YOU. If on the occasional day you just don't feel up to it, relax and pick up afresh on the next workout day, and don't be too eager to increase poundages. If you are not totally comfortable with a certain assistance exercise replace it with one that you prefer that has the same actions, or omit one or two if time and energy so dictates, e.g. forearm work if you have no grip trouble on deadlift.

Any preparatory work before the cycle begins should center around the assistance exercises without including any competitive style squats or heavy deadlifts, keeping the mind fresh while building the necessary muscle base.

CONTEST DAY

At the contest conditions will invariably be different from those of a normal workout. Conditions such as:

Bodyweight loss.
Knurling on the bar for deadlifting (it may not be as good as your training bar).
100 pound plates versus 45's.
Nerves and heat.
Platform.
Refereeing.
Timing.
Visual perception, you might be used to facing a wall in training.
Correct adjustment of racks.

Remember to take all these into account, plus how your warm ups feel, before settling on a sensible choice of poundage for your first attempt. For warm up, don't exhaust yourself, take a little longer in between sets than you have been during workouts. Begin with a couple of very light sets to get the blood flowing and then make good increases using low repetitions. A safe opening attempt should be the poundage you did two doubles with the final heavy workout. However, a word of warning. You should have kept slightly within yourself during all the heavy training lifts making sure they were good, strict powerful lifts. Many lifters, especially on the squat, can sometimes hit a good groove, sometimes not. This should not be the case, groove should be automatic, not hit-or-miss. Know and be honest with yourself and act accordingly. The same could also apply to the deadlift plus the contest might have taken more out of you than you think. Your final judgement should be from your strict warm ups.

SPECIAL NOTE: TRY NOT TO USE ANYTHING IN A CONTEST YOU HAVE NOT TRIED FIRST IN TRAINING. This advice refers to anything from style to new knee wraps, lifting suit, shoes, belt and drugs (from diuretics to speed).

LIFTING APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Lifting Suit

The use of a tight suit in squatting is a distinct advantage. It helps maintain correct style, gives support, helps prevent injuries and adds poundage to the lift. With many different types on the market it really boils down to personal preference. Make sure the suit you wear is working for you as it should, being tight in the legs, hips and over the shoulders, tailoring it, if necessary, to fit you personally to gain maximum advantage. It's advisable to have an extra identical suit with you at contests. For deadlifting such a tight suit is not necessary, however a good snug suit giving some support can make you feel more solid.

Belt

10 cm., or fractionally less than 4 inches, is the maximum thickness allowed for a belt under the I.P.F. rules. Most belts on the market conform to all the I.P.F. regulations. I feel a good solid belt is a must for both squat and deadlift, pulled especially tight on the squat for added support. I prefer the one width 10 cm. belts for both lifts, though some might prefer one a little narrower at the front for deadlifting.

Knee Wraps

Again, knee wraps are essential for providing support and applying a mechanical brake when squatting with heavy poundages. However, wearing knee wraps is not just a matter of bandaging the knee, there is more to it in order to gain maximum benefit. I always wrap in the following manner. Two revolutions completely above the knee cap, down and across and two revolutions completely below the knee cap, then gradually overlap revolutions straight across back over the knee to cover the previous wrapping and gradually again back down, pulling the wraps extremely tight. In addition, it's best to straighten and lock your knee to stabilize the knee cap during wrapping to minimize stress on the ligaments. Chalk the knees before wrapping-allows wraps to bind better. Wrapping the knees for deadlifting, I believe, is unnecessary. A maximum length of 2 meters or 6 feet 6¾ inches and width of 8 cm. or 3.2 inches is permitted under I.P.F. rules and most wraps commercially available for powerlifting conform to these dimensions, and are all much alike.

Wrist Wraps

Wrapping the wrists for squatting helps support this complex joint from the pressures put on it whilst supporting the bar. The same width and half the length of the knee wrap is permitted by the I.P.F. for this purpose.

Shoes

Correct foot wear can serve many functions, the only I.P.F. regulation being that the heel cannot extend laterally. Choose a shoe for the squat that has a good non-slip sole and a heel that affords the best leverage for your style. In addition, I use a high boot that pulls tight around the ankle and shin thus restricting forward movement of the lower leg, helping to keep the knee over the instep during the squat. For deadlifting an extremely flat soled shoe produces a slightly stronger starting position, though for those lifters who naturally pull the bar into thighs, and often get stuck there, a tennis shoe with a slight heel might help in keeping the bar off the thighs to a certain degree. A good non-slip sole is essential for "sumo-style" deadlifting.

T-Shirt

Essential for squatting to help secure the bar when held low on the shoulders.

Straps

As a training aid for deadlifting they should be used only when absolutely necessary by those lifters who have trouble with their grip. For shrugs they should be used on all sets to allow the exercise to be performed correctly.

Chalk

I prefer chalk over resin for the grip in deadlifting as it is less variable in securing a good grip. For the squat, chalk the area of your T-shirt where the bar rests to give extra hold. In a contest the bar itself cannot be chalked for either lift.

Talcum Powder

Talc or baby powder is permitted on the thighs for deadlifting and certainly helps to reduce friction during the last stage of the lift.

Ammonia

"If it helps, sniff it", has always been my motto!